

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)  
Minutes to the Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013, at Lowton Social Club.  
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (Ed T), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Cllr Grundy
- Transport for Leigh – Ged Tyrell and Neil Prescott
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests

*Apologies – Rev T DeMore, Derek Walkden*

No. of Attendees = 49

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1. **Minutes from last meeting** – not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email and paper copies were available.

2. **Accounts**

LENDF bank balance details were on display.

A raffle prize from last year's Fun Day (rocking wooden motorbike) had been donated back to LENDF. It has since been sold via Gill Turner and the £100 added to LENDF funds.

3. **Update on Events**

This year's Fun Day will be on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August – 12.30 till 4.30 and to be held at the Lowton Social Club (using both the main hall and car park area). Oaklands and Meadows Resident Association obtained a grant through Wigan and Leigh Housing to put the event on and LENDF are supporting. Volunteers and Marshalls required ☺ Please contact Irene if you can assist on the day.

OMRA have also secured funding for the 'Playing Out Team' from WLCT to provide free summer activities every Friday during the school holidays – these will take place on Oaklands Play Area between 1.30pm-3.30pm. Start date is 26<sup>th</sup> July.

St Mary's Church – Christmas Tree Celebration. Ed T has agreed to donate his Christmas Tree for display in the church for the duration of the event and it will be labelled as the LENDF tree.

The Lightshaw Meadows project has made it through to the final seven in the environment category of the National Lottery awards and people can vote for the project between now and July 24<sup>th</sup>. You can visit the [National Lottery Awards website](#) and vote for Lightshaw Meadows. If Lightshaw Meadows wins, the project will receive £2,000 towards future improvements.

4. **HS2 / Transport for Leigh**

At last month's meeting the discussion concerning the proposals for a Train Station in Lowton which could 'interchange' with HS2 (if it goes ahead!) got very 'passionate' when the detail of the Relief Road was put into question. Ed T apologised to all who were present and now called for the meeting tonight to be a 'community discussion' and Transport for Leigh have agreed to partake.



Ed T started the discussion as to whether there was any possibility of stopping the link line coming through Lowton for the HS2 route and is in effect the 'preparatory' route for HS3. It is possible that this section is not necessarily required until HS3 to Scotland becomes a reality.

Warrington Council are trying to convince HS2 Ltd that the line should run through their borough making a link to the West Coast Line at Crewe. If this was to happen there would be no need for the link through Lowton, therefore we suggest that the proposed line coming through Lowton is postponed and moved into HS3.

A vote was taken and all were in favour of asking our MP Mr Andy Burnham to support the Warrington bid and have the link made at Crewe. Also for him to try and get the Lowton link postponed until HS3 is a reality.

It would be a travesty if Lowton was carved up with this link line only to find that HS3 never happens due to shortage of funds.

In the short term cutting this link out would save HS2 a substantial amount of money and would maintain a station at Warrington.

No-one wants the maintenance sheds at Lightshaw – we feel these should be built on brownfield land and not in an area close to a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The meeting then discussed various other points regarding the costs of HS2 and any benefits that it may bring to our area.

At this point TfL joined the debate.

There were discussions for over an hour as to the benefits and disadvantages of the proposed railway station at the side of the East Lancs Road.

It was pointed out that a station in this position would destroy four farms whereas a station at Wilton Lane would only destroy one and that is being destroyed by HS2 irrespective of there being a station.

TfL felt that it was not possible for the station to be at Wilton Lane because of the requirements of HS2 needing 1km of straight track either side of the station.

EdT pointed out that apart from Warrington wanting to link the line at Crewe, if this was found not to be possible Warrington want the line moving away from the Taylor Business Park at Risley to save 500 jobs, and this in affect would straighten the line up and make a station possible at Wilton Lane.

TfL's plans do not include a bypass that will take HGVs. They are proposing a link road from the end of Atherleigh Way to the station and onwards to Winwick Lane. This will only take cars.

TfL claim that cars will use the road to avoid Lane Head and its capacity could be 1,400 cars per hour, thereby reducing congestion.

TfL are not associated with HS2 Ltd – though they have had meetings with them regarding their own train station proposal. GedT stated that residents could put forward an objection to HS2 but there would not be a contingency plan for a station to serve the area and therefore no benefit to the community in respect of public transport.

Their proposal is 'aimed' towards securing funding. The proposal is to be submitted to Transport for Greater Manchester in September/October and they hope that TfGM will commission a consultant to prepare a report which will then be presented to HS2 Ltd during the public consultation period before it ends in January 2014. HS2 Ltd are more likely to consider the scheme if it does not contain a road showing HGV movements. If the scheme is passed then TfL would withdraw from the process.

TfL understand the congestion issues faced by Lowton residents, especially at Lane Head, but there are lots of other issues and not all of them can be incorporated into their scheme. If it is accepted by HS2 Ltd then residents can work together to get the capacity increased to include HGVs.

Despite all the 'cons' of HS2 route through Lowton, it was felt that a bypass road is necessary as congestion will not necessarily decrease with the availability of a train station for people to use. GedT estimates the catchment area for passengers would include Atherton, Tylsdesley, Culcheth, St Helens and possibly further. Lowton people

will also be able to access the station via cycleways and paths. He mentioned the benefits would include better job opportunities and economic growth for the area. It would also bring in skills to the area for existing business to develop.

Other comments made during the discussion:

Newton station is inadequate.

Warrington and Birchwood have large employment areas – connectivity needs to be explored.

Train 'capacity' is needed – people will use HS2 therefore more room on normal trains.

GedT reported that Kenyon Junction is in the wrong place for HS2 – not enough Cost:Benefit Ratio. Interchange is the only option for a station.

Cost of ticket? – TfGM will decide ticket price.

A station at Wilton Lane would be less destructive.

TfL have put forward other locations for a station in the past but they have all been knocked back on Cost:Benefit Ratio. This includes Pennington and Kenyon Junction.

Concern that it would encourage development i.e. hotels.

Proposed station on the East Lancs Road destroys four farms this would leave fields unattended and therefore encourage housebuilding.

Congestion would actually increase.

TfL reported that HS2 Ltd investigated over 240 routes – consultation with public to start soon.

An interchange is a stronger argument.

HS2 Directive will mean the Moss will not be destroyed.

TfL's scheme will support 550,000 passengers per year which equates to 10,000 a week.

Who will fund it? – Not sure yet.

HS2 doesn't stop anywhere – what would the benefit be? Economic benefits !

Liverpool wants HS2 as they have a 'super port' for freight

Manchester trams run North, South and East – why not West? Wigan Council did not want the trams – had the money instead. Now have guided busway as an afterthought! General discussion on which areas should have trains/trams.

At this point a number of votes took place.

1. Who wants a station? 5 people voted in favour
2. Who wants a station with a bypass that would take HGVs? – 50% said yes.
3. Oppose HS2 link line through the village? Unanimous 'yes'
4. Oppose maintenance sheds? – Unanimous 'yes'

There were many other subjects discussed however the above are the main points.

TfL asked LENDF if they could work together to design a leaflet/questionnaire to be delivered to every house in Lowton explaining the pros and cons of having a station and asking residents for their views by a referendum. EdT asked for 'footsoldiers' and many volunteered to help deliver and pick up/collect completed forms. So it was agreed to work with TfL on this matter.

At this point Ged Tyrell and Neil Prescott from TfL were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

#### **5. Lane Head South Residents Group**

Peter Sargeant has resigned from the position of Chairman. LENDF wish to thank him for his sterling work with the opposition to the Council's proposed housing in Lowton.

#### **6. Wigan Council – Core Strategy**

Councillors from Standish recalled the Core Strategy to be discussed again by the Scrutiny Committee. They did not want 'any' housing in the Standish area. However with no Core Strategy in place it was explained to them that Standish could have upto 2,500 houses built rather than 1,000, as without the Core Strategy the Council have no defence to stop developers. A vote was taken and they were overruled.

With regard to Golborne and Lowton – residents can not choose which sites will be used for housing but when a planning application goes through LENDF will work with those residents affected in order to mitigate the effect of development i.e. distance between existing and new houses, bungalows must not have 3 storey houses overlooking them.

As the LENDF campaign against the number of housing for Lowton was successful, it has now been agreed that the 'Say No' signs can be removed from gardens. Once again thank you to all those residents who bought/donated signs for the campaign. We do though need to have back the wooden support stakes as these were only on loan to us. Please contact EdT regarding pick up (or if you could deliver them back).

The question put to the Council about the discrepancy of housing numbers has still not been answered.

In Newton-le-Willows there are four housing sites which are underway as St Helens Council have been granting permissions.

#### **7. Susan Spibey – Civic Voice**

Susan gave a short synopsis of the development of a new group who will be part of Civic Voice which is a national charity for the civic movement in England. Their aim is to make places more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. Griff Rhys Jones is the President and the group is supported by numerous MPs. <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/>

The aim is to represent residents over a wide geographical area including Newton, Earlstown, Winwick, Golborne, Lowton, Croft, Ashton and Culcheth. The idea being that this would add weight to residents' arguments around planning issues and may lead to

some joined-up thinking and coordination about what local people might want to happen in their surroundings.

On Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 7.30pm there will be a Civic Voice presentation at Winwick Leisure Centre. EdT and IT will attend and an open invite given to any other members of LHSRG/LENDF.

**8. Last Night of the Proms**

Tickets will soon be available (£3) for the concert to be held on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October at Lowton Civic Hall. Performances once again provided by Golborne Brass Band and Lowton Golborne Newton Community Choir.

**9. Update on Police action re motorscooter riders**

Cllr Grundy gave a quick update that the police/Council will be putting up signage in the areas affected by motorscooters riding on footpaths. These will be Section 59 Notices and give the police the power to seize the bikes without further notice.

**10. Any Other Business**

None at this time.

**11. Next LENDF Monthly Meeting**

12<sup>th</sup> August @ 7.30pm (Lowton Social Club)

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Should you find any omissions or discrepancies in these minutes please contact me on [lendf99@gmail.com](mailto:lendf99@gmail.com) and let me know as soon as possible and the errors will be rectified.

Irene Thomson,  
Secretary – LENDF